

## **Minutes of the Executive Committee Meeting**

The Executive Committee of the McLean County Board met on Tuesday, January 13, 2004, at 4:30 p.m. in Room 700, Law and Justice Center, 104 West Front Street, Bloomington, Illinois.

Members Present: Chairman Sweeney, Members Sorensen, Berglund, Gordon, Bostic, Segobiano, Renner, Bass and Hoselton

Members Absent: Member

Other Members Present: Members Owens

Staff Present: Mr. John Zeunik, County Administrator, Mr. Terry Lindberg, Assistant County Administrator; Ms. Christine Northcutt, County Administrator's Assistant

Department Heads/  
Elected Officials Present: Mr. Mike Gallagher, Assistant Director, Information Services

Others Present: None

Chairman Sweeney called the meeting to order at 4:30 p.m.

Chairman Sweeney presented the minutes of the December 9, 2003 Executive Committee meeting for approval.

Motion by Bass/Gordon to approve and place on file the minutes of the December 9, 2003 meeting. Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney presented three appointments and four resignations for which the Committee's advice and consent is sought.

Motion by Hoselton/Renner to recommend approval of the appointments and resignations recommended by the Chairman. Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney informed the Committee that Mr. Mike Gallagher, Assistant Director, Information Services will present the next item. Mr. Gallagher stated that Information Services is requesting approval of a contract for the IBM AS/400 software and hardware maintenance for the next three years.

Motion by Renner/Berglund to recommend approval of the IBM Software/Hardware Contract for the AS/400. Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney stated that he would ask Mr. Eric Ruud, First Assistant State's Attorney to present the next item. Mr. Ruud stated that the next item is a proposed tax settlement from AMF Bowling Corporation, which was previously deferred by this Committee. Mr. Ruud informed the Committee that he had received notification from AMF Bowling, which owns Circle Lanes, that they had taken Chapter 11 bankruptcy reorganization. At the time, they owed in excess of \$53,000.00 in back property taxes for tax years 2000 and 2001. The bankruptcy court, in the reorganization, absolved them from their debts. However, the County AMF Bowling have some question as to whether the tax lien remains on that property. Mr. Ruud stated that the County's position is that the tax lien will run with the property even if they sell it to another entity. They have offered to pay 70% of the \$53,000.00 that is owed to all of the affected taxing bodies. Mr. Ruud informed the Committee that the amount owed to McLean is approximately \$6,600.00. They are offering to pay 70% or around \$4,700.00. Mr. Ruud noted that he has contacted all of the affected taxing bodies and, to date, has only heard back from two. Heartland Community College and the City of Bloomington Township have agreed to accept the 70% settlement. Mr. Ruud stated that the District 87 School District is owed the largest amount at over \$31,000.00. Their position is that they would go along with a settlement amount of *not less* than 70%. Mr. Ruud stated that he does not have a recommendation for the Committee.

Mr. Renner asked what is the likelihood that all of the back taxes would be received once the property is sold to a new owner. Mr. Ruud replied that the outstanding property taxes could be recouped down the road, if and when the property is sold. Mr. Renner asked if the taxes would *have* to be recouped at some point. Mr. Ruud stated that would be the County's position, but AMF Bowling may take the position that all liens are extinguished with the bankruptcy and this could develop into an lengthy court battle. Ms. Bostic asked if Circle Lanes is open and operating. Mr. Ruud replied that it is open and in operation. Chairman Sweeney asked, if under Chapter 11, would the County be guaranteed to receive the 70%. Mr. Ruud stated that under Chapter 11, according to AMF, we should not receive anything, but there is some dispute in case law as to whether they are totally absolved from tax liability. The County's position is that AMF is absolved from paying all of their creditors, but not from tax liability. Mr. Ruud stated that this is a gray area. Ms. Bostic stated that if they can afford to pay 70% then they should just pay the entire tax bill. Chairman Sweeney asked why District 87 has not made a decision, since they are due the largest amount. Mr. Ruud replied that he was unsure as to why they have not made a decision yet. Chairman Sweeney stated that he thinks that the County should wait to hear what District 87 decides before making a decision.

Mr. Hoselton stated that he agrees with Chairman Sweeney. The County should wait for District 87 to make their decision. Mr. Hoselton also stated that he would not want this proposed settlement to set a precedent.

Mr. Segobiano stated that he agrees with Chairman Sweeney and Mr. Hoselton. He noted that the property which Circle Lanes is located on, is a prime location on Veterans Parkway and the County should wait to see what some of the other taxing bodies decide.

Mr. Ruud stated that he would speak to District 87's attorney and let them know that the County does not wish to make a decision until they know what District 87's intentions are. Chairman Sweeney asked Mr. Ruud what is the mortgage on the property. Mr. Ruud stated that he does not have that information. Mr. Ruud stated that he will keep the Committee abreast of any changes or updates on this issue.

Chairman Sweeney stated that the next item on the agenda is the 2004 McLean County Annual Legislative Program. Ms. Berglund stated that Mr. Lindberg is passing out the proposed 2004 Legislative Program. Ms. Berglund informed the Committee that there are several items which the Committee would like to address with Legislators. Mr. Segobiano asked if the Legislative Committee could prepare a synopsis for the Executive Committee to be discussed at a Stand-up Committee meeting. Ms. Berglund replied that the information will be included in the Board Agenda packet and can be considered at a Stand-up Meeting. Ms. Berglund informed the Committee that the Legislative Breakfast is scheduled for January 23 at 7:00 a.m. in the County Board Room.

Chairman Sweeney stated that the next item is a request for approval of a Resolution of Congratulations for the 2003 Bloomington Junior High School Girls' Basketball Team.

Motion by Segobiano/Gordon to recommend approval  
of a Resolution of Congratulations for the 2003 Bloomington  
Junior High School Girls' Basketball Team. Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney stated the next item is the report of the standing Committees.

Mr. Duffy Bass, Chairman of the Transportation Committee, stated that the Transportation Committee brings no items for action at this time.

Mr. Matt Sorensen, Chairman of the Finance Committee, stated that the Finance Committee brings three items for action. Mr. Sorensen stated that these items are all related. All of the items account for grant money received by the WIC program in the Health Department. The first item is a budget amendment for purchase of computers.

The second item is a budget amendment to fund a part-time Social Worker. The last item is the Full-Time Equivalent Resolution for the staffing changes.

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Motion by Sorensen/Renner to recommend approval of Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2003 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0103; an Ordinance of the McLean County Board Amending the 2004 Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0103; and a Resolution Amending the Fiscal Year 2004 McLean County Full-Time Equivalent Position Resolution Associated with an Ordinance to amend the Fiscal Year 2004 McLean County Combined Appropriation and Budget Ordinance for Fund 0103 - WIC Program – Health Department. Motion carried.

There were no questions for Mr. Sorensen.

Mr. Tari Renner, Chairman of the Justice Committee, stated that the Justice Committee brings one item for action. This item is a request for approval of an Emergency Appropriation Ordinance amending the McLean County Fiscal Year 2004 Combined Annual Appropriation and Budget Ordinance General Fund 0001, ESDA Department 0047.

Motion by Renner/Sorensen to recommend approval of an Emergency Appropriation Ordinance Amending the McLean County Fiscal Year 2004 Combined Annual Appropriation and Budget Ordinance General Fund 0001, ESDA Department 0047. Motion carried.

There were no questions for Mr. Renner.

Mr. George Gordon, Chairman of the Land Use and Development Committee, stated that the Land Use and Development Committee brings no items for action this evening. There were no questions for Mr. Gordon.

Ms. Diane Bostic, Chairman of the Property Committee, stated that the Property Committee brings three items for action. Ms Bostic stated that the first item is a request for approval of a Lease and Contract extension agreement No. 1 to lease the Old Courthouse Building and contract for operation and maintenance dated December 3, 2003. Ms. Bostic stated that the other two items for action are lease amendments by the PBC and that she will group all three together.

Motion by Bostic/Berglund to recommend approval of a lease and contract extension agreement No. 1 to lease the Old Courthouse Building and contract for Operation and Maintenance dated December 3, 2003; and Attachment No. 2 to Amendment to Lease and Operation and Maintenance Agreement for the City/County Office Building; and Attachment No. 13 to the amendment to the Lease and Operation and Maintenance Agreement for the Law and Justice Center. Motion carried.

Chairman Sweeney stated that the next item is the report of the County Administrator. Mr. Zeunik stated that in the Committee's packet, he has provided the Committee with a report that addressed the questions that Mr. Hoselton asked at the last Executive Committee meeting about how the County benefits from its membership in NACo. Mr. Zeunik stated that he broke the report down into four categories. First, what does the County gain from its membership in NACo. Second, what is the annual cost of membership in NACo. Third, what are the expenses incurred when attending the NACo Legislative and Annual conferences. Fourth, what limits are placed on the number of Board Members attending the Annual and Legislative Conferences. Mr. Zeunik stated that he has included some of NACo's marketing materials showing the ten reasons why Counties should belong to NACo. Mr. Zeunik stated that he has included specific information on how McLean County has used and benefited from NACo. They are: Lobbying at the Federal Level, the Financial Services Center, Training Workshops, Networking, and Research and Information. Mr. Zeunik informed the Committee that he also included a copy of the invoice for the 2004 NACo Membership. That invoice is due and funds were appropriated in the County Board's departmental budget to pay the \$2,613.00 for membership dues. Mr. Zeunik informed the Committee that he has listed the last four years of conference expenses for their review. Obviously, there are not any travel, hotel, conference expenses incurred yet in FY 2004. Because of the fiscal constraints that the County has faced in the last two years, the amount appropriated for conference expenses has decreased from \$15,000.00 appropriated in FY 2001 to \$6,000.00 appropriated in FY 2004. The registration fees and amounts reimbursed to Board Members for airline tickets, hotel rooms, meals, taxi cabs is also included in this report. The number of Board Members that have attended the conferences in the last four years and the number of Board Members who serve on a NACo Steering Committee has also been included.

Mr. Zeunik noted that he has included an Section 5.18 from the *McLean County Board Rules* which sets forth the policy and guidelines on travel for Board Members attending national and regional conferences. Lastly, Mr. Zeunik informed the Committee that he has included the conference schedule for the National Conferences for the next several years.

The 2004 Annual Conference is in Mericopa County, Phoenix, Arizona. The 2005 Annual Conference is to be hosted by the City and County of Honolulu, Hawaii. In 2006, the City

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and County of Denver, Colorado will host the Annual Conference. In 2007, the Annual Conference will be hosted by the City and County of Richmond, Virginia. Mr. Zeunik stated that the Legislative Conference is always held in Washington D.C. Mr. Zeunik stated that he would be happy to answer any questions from the Committee.

Mr. Hoselton stated that he notices that when NACo's Annual Conference was held in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, only one Board Member attended. Mr. Hoselton stated that he is concerned that there will be more interest by Board Members when the Conferences are held in a more desirable location.

Mr. Segobiano stated that he appreciates Mr. Hoselton bringing this question to the Committee. Mr. Segobiano also noted that he supports McLean County retaining its membership in NACo. However, in times of budgetary constraint the Board should be looking to send representatives such as the County Administrator and the County Board Chairman. Mr. Segobiano stated that when the County Board looks at cutting programs such as the Rescue Squad, the Board may want to look first at the spending for schooling and conferences.

Mr. Bass stated that he favors continuing our membership in NACo. Mr. Bass also noted that it is good for County Board Members to be able to go to the various conferences that NACo offers and network with other County officials.

Mr. Hoselton stated that in addition to the cost issue, he was interested in knowing more about NACo and Mr. Zeunik's report offers a wealth of information. Mr. Hoselton also mentioned that he was under the impression that County officials returning from a NACo Conference were to turn in a written report. Mr. Hoselton hasn't ever seen a written report. Mr. Hoselton also noted that he does not think that the Board Members should be attending the conference in Honolulu, Hawaii. He stated that, perhaps, the County could pick up a portion of the cost, but the expenses will be very high for that particular conference.

Ms. Berglund informed the Committee that she has attended the NACo Annual Conferences since 1993 and the Legislative Conferences since 1994. Ms. Berglund noted that, at the last conference, she was appointed to five different NACo Committees, one of which is a Steering Committee. Ms. Berglund explained that not everyone that requests to be on a Committee gets appointed to that Committee. Ms. Berglund informed the Committee that if the County pays for her conference registration fee to go to the Annual Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii, she will pay for all of the other expenses out of her own pocket. Ms. Berglund advised the Committee that she has attended a third NACo function for the last two years at her own expense. Ms. Berglund stated that she always brings back information and materials for various departments

throughout the County. Ms. Berglund commented that it is very exciting to meet other County officials and compare notes with them. We all have many things in common and are alike in many ways. She encouraged all Board Members to become involved.

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Mr. Benjamin Owens echoed Ms. Berglund sentiments. He informed the Committee that the only reason that he did not attend the Annual Conference in Milwaukee, Wisconsin is because he was particularly busy with his profession at that time. He could not get away. He explained that the Legislative Conference, held in Washington, D.C., is a prime opportunity to network with our Congressmen and Senators. Mr. Owens stated that he, during last year's Legislative Conference, spoke with Congressman Johnson about maintenance of the interstate interchanges and bridges over Interstate 55. He encouraged other Board Members to let he or Ms. Berglund know of any issues that they would like to discuss with Legislators because they would be happy to discuss issues on behalf of other Board members. Mr. Owens added that the only thing that he would ask the County pay for at the Annual Conference in Honolulu, Hawaii would be his airfare, a portion of his hotel expenses, and his registration fees.

Mr. Segobiano stated that this has been a good dialogue. However, some things that have been mentioned concern him. He noted that we are definitely not all the same at these conferences. Mr. Segobiano stated that in his opinion, McLean County is a leader in the State of Illinois. Under the leadership of Mr. Zeunik, McLean County has surpassed many of its counterparts. Also, when Board Members attend these conferences and pay their own expenses, Mr. Segobiano asked who are they representing. Mr. Segobiano noted that is a concern for him.

Ms. Berglund stated that she goes because there are meetings that she must attend. Ms. Berglund noted that she goes to the meetings and speaks with the County in mind. Mr. Gordon stated that he doesn't think that anyone who attends a Conference speaks for McLean County or the County Board. Mr. Gordon stated that Board Members speak from their own point of view and exchange information as a representative of their own County.

Chairman Sweeney stated that he would entertain a motion to proceed with the 2004 NACo Annual Membership and give the County Administrator the permission authorize payment of the 2004 dues.

Motion by Gordon/Hoselton to continue with NACo Membership  
In 2004 and authorize the County Administrator to approve payment  
of the dues.

Mr. Segobiano stated that he would like to see the discussion of this item continue. Mr. Segobiano recommended that there should be clearer guidelines for attendance at these conferences. Chairman Sweeney stated that this item will be placed on next month's Committee agenda.

Motion carried.

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Chairman Sweeney asked if there was any other business or communications. Hearing none, Chairman Sweeney directed the Committee's attention to item G on the Legislative Agenda. This item deals with the City of Bloomington Election Commission and the possibility of abolishing this Commission. He informed the Committee that the City of Peoria is looking to abolish its Election Commission and this is an item that McLean County should be looking at as well.

Chairman Sweeney presented the bills as recommended and transmitted by the County Auditor for payment. The fund total for this month is \$582,499.59.

Motion by Bostic/Gordon to recommend approval of the Bills as of December 31, 2003 as presented by the County Auditor. Motion carried.

There being no further business to come before the Committee, the meeting was adjourned at 5:34 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Christine Northcutt

Recording Secretary

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